

# DUST.BIN

## THE Newsletter FOR Dedicated Users of ST's

EDITORS  
Mike Glenn & Rex King

DUST BIN is published on a semi-regular basis (usually bi-monthly). The opinions in this newsletter are the author's and DO NOT necessarily reflect that of DUST. All articles submitted should be sent to the address on the front cover and should be in 1ST Word, ASCII, or Publishing Partner format - Single OR Double sided Disk.



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## In This Issue

*AUGUST 1987*

**Typesetter Elite** **Page 2**  
Review by John & Charlie Postle

**Opinion** **Page 3**  
by Charlie Postle

**DUST Group News** **Page 4**  
by Mike Glenn

**Laser Chess** **Page 6**  
Review by Linda Glenn

**FLASH - Dbasic** **Page 6**  
**Update**

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# TYPESETTER ELITE

## REVIEW

### SOFTWARE REVIEW

by John & Charlie Postle

Typesetter Elite by  
Dennis Young & Len Dorfman  
from  
XLEnt Software

## **T**his program has

been billed by others as a poor man's desktop publishing program. Actually, TYPESETTER is more of a "page organizer" and as such needs a lot of setup before it can do a complete job of typesetting. After reading the rather smallish manual, we booted TYPESETTER on our ATARI 1040 ST color system and began to learn about typesetting. We discovered that the manual was short, presumably because they had little to say. 'Tell you what we mean':

TYPESETTER provides a reasonable number of fonts to work with, both graphic and system. We pulled them all out of the GEM file and system menus and we were pleased with the appearance of all of them. The first "difficulty" we encountered was the nearly complete lack of on screen indexing. Sizing and placement of characters on the screen was mostly by trial and error. The program gives the user a chance to change character sizes but the actual placement is difficult, especially if mixed character sizes are used.

We made up a number of TITLE pages using TYPESETTER but discovered that the text editor TSE80.PGM would not load. It gave a fatal error on boot that we could not get around. The difficulty was rectified by calling

XLEnt Software and requesting a disk with a file called TSE80.RSC, which was missing from our disk. When the text editor was finally running, we experimented with it for a while. The manual says, flatly, that it isn't much of a text editor. They were correct! You can use other word processors, so long as you save the file in ASCII format. The TSE80 program will then translate it into TYPESETTER format.

One other problem we encountered using TSE80 was the lack of handshake indexing between programs. If the user chooses to put text into a box on the TYPESETTER PAGE, there is no way to see that box size and shape in the TSE80 text editor. The problem is made more difficult by the TYPESETTER SCREEN being roughly 2/3 the PAGE width and the TSE80 screen is 80 columns. It means counting characters or "cut and drag" to get the text where you want it. Any means available requires a lot of time and no small amount of trial and error.

Before we got the text editor running, we were stuck with using the built in fonts to enter text. It wasn't easy because, at least on the color system, the user only sees a small portion of the PAGE. Typing a simple line across the page means typing in the area you can see, then with the drop-down menu, scroll the page over, realign the cursor, then type in the remainder of the line. To continue the line, the user must go through the same process, back to the left side of the page. The process is very slow and frustrating. We found that TITLES using large characters was much easier than text. We did not have the equipment to try the mono version. The manual also points out that the user needs to

have plenty of blank disks on hand. They mean it! And 520ST owners, be mindful that this program takes a sizable chunk of ram.

We would like to suggest to XLEnt Software some badly needed changes and/or additions to TYPESETTER ELITE:

**FIRST**, create a form of on screen indexing. Either cursor x/y numbers, locked to PAGE rather than SCREEN. Or better yet, an erasable snap grid. Have the cursor stay at location relative to PAGE rather than SCREEN during scrolling.

**SECOND**, fix the scroll so it works on screen rather than from menus as found in programs like POWERPLAN by Abacus Software.

**THIRD**, use the "example" technique on other menus like that you used in the line sizing menu, especially the font sizes.

**AND FINALLY**, make the NEO and DEGAS transfers work on the color STs.

In our opinion, TYPESETTER ELITE is not yet worthy of the XLEnt Software name. The company has produced some very good software for the ATARI family. It's a shame to sour that fine reputation with a program that is unfinished. As we pointed out above, the monochrome version may work just fine. We don't know.

Our review was based on our use of the color version. AND, TYPESETTER is supposed to load DEGAS and NEOCHROME pictures onto the PAGE, however we found that this too was difficult / impossible. We tried to transfer several pictures from NEO to TYPESETTER via the translation program MEDVERT.PGM. This process is supposed to convert medium res NEO pictures into hi-res monochrome TYPESETTER files. All we ever got was doubled pictures with scrambled colors that we couldn't use. We made up a special black on white NEO picture



and translated it to TYPESETTER. It came out as two pictures (side by side) which had inversed during the conversion.

TYPESETTER has a mini drawing feature which allows the user to create graphic images on the PAGE. The drawing features are not as handy and full featured as NEOCHROME or DEGAS, and the manual states that it is not intended to be a paint or drawing program. We found the graphic tools great for making boxes and frames and for shading areas of the page. The one formatable stumbling block was, again, the awkward scroll and indexing features.

To give credit where credit is due, we found TITLES fun to do although difficult and time consuming. The printed output was satisfactory and rewarding (especially considering the time spent). TYPESETTER ELITE is fully GEM featured and makes good use of the ATARI's function keys and mouse.

The program may work better on a mono-ST although the manual states that the program will "FUNCTION IDENTICALLY" on both color & monochrome. Document writers beware, DON'T SAY IT WORKS "IDENTICALLY" ON BOTH SYSTEMS IF IT DOESN'T.

Getting back to the TYPESETTER ELITE manual for a moment; We originally found the five page PREFACE to be a heartwarming story of two dedicated software programmers who endured beyond fatigue and great mental suffering to produce TYPESETTER ELITE, its forerunners and associated sister programs. However, in retrospect, we now see the monolog as a kind of caveat, the writers hoping the purchaser will understand and not judge too harshly. Sorry, it didn't work.



## **note of the day**

To Error Is Human, To  
Blame It On A Computer  
Is Even More So.

## **OPINION**

by CHARLIE POSTLE

Editors Note: This is ONE members editorial opinion. If you feel strongly about a subject OR would like to make your views known on this subject please submit them for inclusion in an upcoming DUST.BIN.....MIKE

The presentation of many questionable programs on the market brings to mind several points which seem, in my opinion, to weaken the computer software marketplace. First, a program which is incomplete in itself, must be sold WITH the programs or utilities needed to make it complete. Enticing the buyer with promises, however subtle, that cannot be fully attained without further purchases, is wrong and should be illegal. Many program documents clearly suggest that other commercial programs are available which will enhance their usefulness. Unfortunately this sometimes means that the program just won't work without them. If a program truly needs others to get them to work, then a statement to that effect should be on the package.

Secondly, any software company, regardless of type of program sold, has a responsibility to it's consumers to provide complete documentation. Consumers of HACKER, for example, get NO documentation. This is, of course, as it should be for the type of product included. Purchasers of utilities, languages,

data bases and complex processors need the fullest documentation available. They, after all, are not playing (guessing) games.

Last, there is no excuse in these days of 68000 mpu computer technology to provide a program, however simple or complex, that is not completely and utterly USER FRIENDLY. Some software manufacturers try to make extremely complex programs fit into too small a package and, when it won't fit, try to squeeze it by omitting those things needed to make the program easy to use. If it takes 2 or more disks to hold a complete package, then so be it. If a consumer needs a complex program, chances are he'll have (or get) the hardware to do the job. *Don't make a difficult program impossible to use.*

I encourage ALL SOFTWARE CONSUMERS to write to the manufacturer of any purchased program and let them know how you feel about the product. It may not get a bad program or poor documentation to work out better for you, but it may get the manufacturer to improve his future products. And, on the other side, if you like a particular product or feature, write and tell the manufacturers that, too.

THE END



## **HAD A BETTER IDEA - DO YOU?**

## **LET EVERYONE KNOW IN YOUR DUST BIN!**



**B**y comparison, the last couple of months with DUST have been a whirlwind of activity. That is not to say that it has been stagnant before, just a lot more happening recently! The following will try to accurately reflect this intensity level.

**W**ith any luck, by the time you read this, the 12 members that ordered *PC-Ditto* will have received their copy. We had originally planned to order them directly from *Avant-Garde* (through their mail offer) but, at the last moment went a different direction. Dave Wiser (*Wiser Electronics*) offered to order and sell the product to us at the same price (\$72.00 - local tax included). This situation was the best of both worlds. It gets us the program at the same reduced rate as company direct, lets us support one of our local advertisers, and will give us a center of support from a local dealer.

As an add-on, *Wildlife BBS* (the official DUST BBS) has added a SIG specifically for MS-DOS / PC-Ditto program support. This SIG has really started to fill up! At last count there were about 40 MS-DOS programs available including games, word processing, telecommunications, utilities, etc..... There is something for everyone (with a lot more to come!). "Krazy Ed" (our friendly WIZOP) and yours truly, spent one evening porting over a bunch of PD MS-DOS software I had accumulated on my Sanyo MBC-555 computer. Turned out to be an interesting time!

I have the two computers (the Sanyo & the Atari) in the same

room. Now, the idea was to get the MS-DOS programs from the 5 1/4" drives to 3 1/2". This was easy enough with a null modem hooking the two computers together but was rather slow moving one file at a time (even at 19,200 baud) since the set-up for each transfer is what takes the most time.

Ed came up with a solution for this (why is he called *Krazy*?). He had a copy of an MS-DOS ARChive program on a 3 1/2" disk which we ported over to the Sanyo. We then could ARC a whole bunch of programs into one file. This not only allowed the transference of multiple programs at once but also compressed the files (which also reduced the time required for transference)! *This was great!* During this process we also learned another interesting fact:

You can use either the ST .ARC program or the MS-DOS .ARC program to de-arc these files! *Strange but true*

**M**embership to DUST has been skyrocketing during the last two months! In this period we have added 16 new (or previous) members to our roster! We *WELCOME* you and know you will add greatly to our collective knowledge of the ST and computers in general.

**A**t the last meeting we had 46 members present! This was the largest attendance at a single meeting so far. I wonder if the

fact that we had 10 door prizes had anything to do with it?

The previously mentioned door prizes were provided by *DTACK GROUNDED INC.* in the form of users manuals for their new language *DBASIC*. They also gave the group a master disk and enough copyrighted labels to produce a working program disk for EVERY member in the group! (If you did not get yours at the last meeting, they are still available for \$2.00 each, just to cover the cost of the disk)

If you were not one of the 10 lucky winners, manuals are available from the company. Ordering instructions may be found on the README file on the disk. (The cost is \$39.95 which includes the latest update program disk, which by the way may be shared with other members) Even if you decide to not program in this language, if you have the disk, you will be able to RUN public domain programs written in *DBASIC*. A REAL BARGAIN AT \$2.00!

The following is a list of members that won the 10 door prizes:

**BUD WHITE  
MOISIS DENIS  
MARK DWILLIS  
CALVIN STATE  
JAY EITNER  
TONY FUGAZZI  
CHRIS TYLER  
SVEN NILSSON  
TOM COLLINS  
KEVIN MULLIKIN**

My congratulations to each of you, and I hope you can find some good uses for the program.





## DUST DISK UPDATE

The group now has 50 DUST DISKS available to members at \$4.00 each. These are chock full of useful programs, games, utilities, or pictures. Be sure to download the latest ARCHIVE listing from WILDLIFE BBS to find out what is on each disk or check out the printed list available at each meeting. Just a reminder;

This is the only money making project for DUST. We use the profits from these disks to provide this FREE newsletter to our members and for all operating expenses. We are also starting a world-wide newsletter exchange with other ST users groups that will be available to members through our library.

This means of obtaining operating funds has worked very well in the past and has allowed us to continue to be ONE OF THE VERY FEW COMPUTER USERS GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES TO CHARGE NO MEMBERSHIP DUES! I hope you continue to support DUST through the purchase of the upcoming DUST DISKS not only because I would like to keep it this way, but also since they are a bargain at the price!



Sven Nilsson, our Membership Chairman has added a new "hat" to his collection. He is now our new newsletter exchange coordinator as well as retaining his previous duties. Sven is in the process of building a library file of these newsletters and they will be available for members to check out at the meetings. Just another "bennie" for DUST members! Sven does a lot for our club and I, for one would like to say THANKS!



DUST's official BBS, WILDLIFE, has been going through some growing pains recently. "Krazy Ed" Malkiewicz now has a 30 Meg. hard drive on line. Not only does that mean more storage space for programs & messages but this drives access time is much shorter (1/2) than the previous drive. This should improve file transfer times, especially for long programs!

The "look" and the "feel" of the BBS is also undergoing constant change. This will hopefully lead to a system that is both pleasant and easy to use. Please bear with Ed and the other SYSOPS, and if you have any ideas for improvement please leave Ed an E-Mail message. Although all suggestions CAN NOT be implemented, any idea will be looked at.



It's hard to believe, but DUST is now over one year old (we started in June, 1986). I hope every member has got as much out of the group as I have. There have been times where getting this newsletter out on a (self imposed) deadline has been pretty tough, but I would not trade the experience of knowing and working with all of you for anything. Here's hoping we have just as good a 2nd year as we did the 1st!



Finally, I feel obligated to, once again, ask for your assistance in the preparation of this newsletter. Without your literary input to this rag it is going to become stagnant. Differing points of view, different writing styles, and the additional knowledge you could share with other DUST members are vital to making this newsletter as good as it can be.

I have tried to make the process of submitting material as easy as possible. There are several ways you can do this;

1.) Upload it to WILDLIFE BBS as a file AND leave me an E-Mail note telling me the file name.

2.) Give it to me at a meeting on either a single sided or double sided disk. (it may be in 1st Word / ASCII / ST Writer / or 3 column Publishing Partner format) You will get a disk back.

3.) Send a disk (in any of the above formats) to the P.O. Box on the front cover of this newsletter.

Just about anything is needed including tutorials, hints & tips, software reviews, hardware reviews, etc..... Reviews DO NOT have to be "I LOVE IT" pieces. They just must be honest and not slanderous. If you have used a product, either good OR bad, let the rest of us know about it. DUST is not affiliated with any other group, organization, or commercial concern. Therefore, we can be totally objective as to editorial content of OUR newsletter.

Besides, it will look good, seeing your name in print, knowing it will be read internationally!

Mike







# LASER CHESS

A Review by Linda Glenn

Found on *COMPUTE'S*  
2nd BOOK of ATARI ST

**W**ham ! I have you now. You are soon to be dust (no pun intended). It will have been worth dying 8 times if I can just get these angles right and if I do you have bought the farm buddy. Doesn't sound like to Chess to you does it? Well it isn't. It's Laser Chess. Someone really diabolic made this as a sure way to drive a person crazy.

**T**o play the game you have a nine by nine grid and eight different types of pieces. You are equipped with a laser, King, hypercube, block, beam splitter, triangular mirror, diagonal mirror and straight mirror. In addition to these there is a permanent hypersquare in the center. It is a transport square that either player can use. The winner is the one who kills the opposing King.

**N**ow that sounds simple doesn't it? You have many options available to you. Each time it is your turn you have a total of two moves available to you. You may move a piece two spaces forward, backward or in a two space L as the knight in regular chess. You may use a block or your King to capture another piece. You may take one shot with laser in combination with another move. Each of the pieces has a rotating feature. You can aim the laser, mirrors or blocks (one side of them is mirrored) in any of the four

directions. Now you get down to the fun stuff. Using the mirrors and splitter you try to kill the opposing King. You have to remember that you may not move diagonally and that if your laser hits a mirror it will do a reflective bounce. That can work against you as well as for you. If you set up a mirror or your opponent does where it can bounce your laser beam directly back at you it can destroy your laser and it takes a far better player than I am right now to win without one.

**O**ne of the things that I had the worst time with was the angle of the bounce. I kept trying to figure out the angles at a true reflective bounce as you do in pool. In laser chess you only bounce in straight lines horizontally or vertically. Once I got that straight in my head I could figure out a better plan of attack. Unfortunately my better plans haven't worked out very well yet. But I will keep on playing this fascinating game and with practice and some sneaky reflective moves I will come away with a victory. How sweet it will be.

**R**emember to protect your King. When he is done for so are you and the game is over. As you can tell I really enjoyed this game and will continue to play it. The variety of combinations with the laser beams bouncing off of every mirror in its line of fire really make it interesting and causes you to have to plan your opponents downfall carefully.

THE END



## A BLAST FROM THE PAST

The noted mathematician John von Neuman was an incurable practical joker. During World War II, when he constructed his famous electronic brain for the government, he identified it on delivery as a *Mathematical Analyser, Numerical Intergrater, And Computer*.

Scientists worked with it for several days before they realized that the first letter of the name it's inventor had given it spelled *MANIAC*.

## TidBits - 9 Years Ago This Month - August 1978 - Byte Magazine:

You could buy a Trace 32 kilobyte (32,000) static memory board for \$883.00! Just think, you can now buy a COMPLETE 1040 ST system for about the same price! (and have a computer, monitor AND 968,000 extra bytes of memory!)



## FLASH

Today (28 July) I received a letter from Dack Grounded Inc. (the makers of *Dbasic*). It seems the original disk had a couple of bugs in it. So, after only a couple of weeks they have sent us an up-dated master disk.

Now, this can be either good or bad. If they put out the product to let us test it (without stating it's in BETA) that's bad. BUT, the good part is they are really trying to get a good product to the users. Notwithstanding this issue, the up-dated master disk will be available at the next meeting.....Mike



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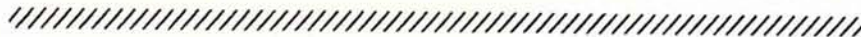
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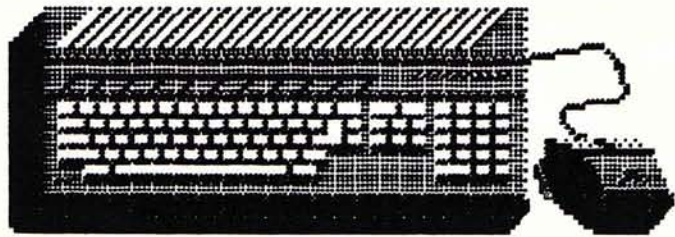
**DUST  
MEETING  
DATES**

4 August  
18 August  
1 Sept.  
15 Sept.  
6 Oct.  
20 Oct.

**SHARE  
YOUR  
GOOD  
FORTUNE  
BRING A  
FRIEND,  
EVERY  
BODY  
WILL  
BENIFIT.**

# DUST BIN

THE Newsletter for Dedicated Users of ST's



Volume 2 / # 4

August 1987

# DUST

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